

A Brief Overview of the Existing Zoning Ordinance (LDC)

The LDC in its current format is a complex document because it includes numerous zoning methodologies that have been added to it over the past few years. These include:

- Conventional or “Euclidian” use-based zoning provisions that date back to the 1970s and before;
- Performance-based zoning provisions added in 1991 (these establish the allowed development potential of a property based on how it “performs” with regard to such natural features as slopes, forest (tree) resources and/or floodplains). The 1991 performance-based code revisions also combined the former zoning ordinance and subdivision ordinance from the City Code into a consolidated Land Development Code (LDC). The LDC was restructured and formatted at that time. The original 17 conventional zoning districts were retained and are identified as “Established” or “E” districts, for example, the C-3-E (Highway Commercial District Established) zoning district. In addition, 18 new zoning districts were added. These districts do not have the “E” designation (for example, UC (Urban Commercial district)), and they are applied through the application of performance-based zoning techniques developed by Lane Kendig and Associates.
- Design review guidelines to better address site and building design adopted in 2002 that apply to multi-family residential, commercial, institutional and business park developments; and
- Traditional neighborhood standards based on the Smart Code requiring a form-based code for a Traditional Neighborhood District adopted in November 2007. (These codes regulate urban form expressed through building placement and street design primarily rather than regulating use as a primary consideration).

Since 1991 the LDC has been amended numerous times to resolve conflicts, add new provisions, and ensure consistency with Arizona statutes. In addition, three overlay historic zoning districts have been adopted as well as the Traditional Neighborhood District and provisions to allow Accessory Wind Energy Systems (Wind Turbines) in commercial and industrial zones.

The LDC requires modernization, codification and improvement. The desired zoning ordinance (it will have a new name) will be coherent, integrated, concise, consistent, innovative, and user friendly.